**Project Overview:** The research project is a comprehensive exploration of the experiences of parents raising children on the autism spectrum.

**Paper 1 (Mixed Method Research – MMR):** This first paper focuses on the expectations, concerns, and self-efficacy of parents by examining factors such as speech and language services.

**Primary Research Questions:**

1. What are the expectations and concerns of parents for their children on the autism spectrum?
2. What factors contribute to the self-efficacy of parents in supporting the developmental needs of their children on the autism spectrum?
3. How do speech and language services impact the self-efficacy of parents and the developmental needs of their children on the autism spectrum?

**Paper 2 (MMR):** This paper delves into the personal experiences of parents, exploring the joys and challenges they face. It also examines how relationships with spouses, family, and friends are affected by raising a child on the autism spectrum.

**Primary Research Questions:**

1. What are the challenges of parenting a child on the autism spectrum?
2. How does the relationship with a spouse and the broader family network influence the experiences of parents raising a child on the autism spectrum?
3. In what ways does having a child on the autism spectrum impact a parent’s social life and relationships with friends?

**Paper 3 (only Qualitative):** The third paper looks at societal perceptions and attitudes towards autism, and how these impact parents’ experiences. It also discusses the consequences of stigma on parents and their children, and how parents handle such experiences.

**Primary Research Questions:**

1. How do societal perceptions and attitudes towards autism impact the experiences of parents raising a child on the autism spectrum?
2. What are the consequences of stigma on parents and their children?
3. How do parents handle experience with stigma directed at them or their child on the autism spectrum?

**Themes across two groups:** Across all topics, under broad themes, identify how the themes play out across parents of children on the autism spectrum who are verbal and those who are minimally verbal